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ABSTRACT

Dual career families were exceptions to the norm in the 1960's but have steadily increased in prevalence. Dual career professional couples (N=34) were studied to assess the determinants of marital quality and stability in their relationships. Results revealed that couples in high quality marriages reported satisfaction with all aspects of relationship intimacy, had congruent perceptions that the husband's career was pre-eminent and that the wife's career course was more erratic, and had husbands who were supportive of the wife's career. Egalitarian role sharing, similar careers, and older children were also characteristic. Couples in low quality marriages reported dissatisfaction with relationship intimacy, especially emotional intimacy; this was true most acutely for wives. Children were younger and there was more stress due to childcare, household tasks, and husbands' lack of support for the wives' careers. The findings suggest that a crucial factor for marital quality is spousal consensus on the philosophical/value issues which underlie more overt conflicts about childcare or household management tasks. (JAC)

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DETERMINANTS OF MARITAL QUALITY IN DUAL CAREER COUPLES

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Abstract

This study identified themes differentiating high quality and low quality dual career marriages. Thirty-four professional dual career couples completed the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) Inventory and the Career/Marital Stress of Women Inventory (CMSWI). Lewis and Spanier's (1979) model of marital quality was selected as the theoretical framework for a qualitative analysis. Themes related to socioeconomic adequacy, wife's satisfaction with her employment, degree of husband's approval of wife's employment, optimal household composition, community embeddedness, positive regard for spouse, emotional gratification, effectiveness of communication, role-fit, and amount of interaction emerged. Implications are discussed.

Empirical scrutiny of the dual career family is a relatively new research area, having its genesis in the late 1960's. Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) originated the term "dual career family", describing the family in which both marital partners were engaged in work having a developmental sequence and requiring a high degree of commitment. Such families were exceptions to the norm in the 1960's,

but have steadily increased in prevalence in the 1970's and early 1980's. The proportion of married women aged 15 to 54 in the work force has more than doubled between 1950 and 1978 (25.2% to 55.4%) and is expected to reach 66.7% by 1990 (Smith, 1979). Not all of these women are pursuing professional careers, however; only 15 to 18 percent of the total work force is engaged in professional work (Shertzer, 1981). Poloma and Garland (1980) estimated that around three million women in the United States now combine professional employment with marriage. Sixty-three percent of families in the above-$25,000 income bracket include an employed wife (Rice, 1979).

The dual career family is distinguished from the dual work family by the wife's academic preparation, motivation for working, and level of career commitment. Wives in dual work families usually enter the labor force due to financial necessity; wives in dual career families are more intrinsically motivated and invest more of their identities in their work. Marital satisfaction may increase when lower class wives go to work, since the family's standard of living is noticeably improved. On the other hand, Berman, Sacks, and Lief (1975) concluded that a two-professional marriage is one with a high degree of risk. The union of two highly educated individuals with diverse goals, strong achievement needs, demanding schedules, and multiple role responsibilities requires considerable skill in dealing with conflicts and in

negotiating compromises. If the parent role is added, further complications arise (Holahan and Gilbert, 1979). This balancing of roles becomes too difficult for some women; statistics reveal that divorce is significantly higher for professional women than it is for professional men (Epstein, 1970).

This paper addresses determinants of marital quality and stability in dual career couples. The theoretical framework for this qualitative analysis was developed by Lewis and Spanier (1979), who proposed that the single greatest predictor of marital stability is marital quality. Their concept of marital quality encompassed satisfaction, happiness, adjustment, and other related dimensions and evaluations of the marital relationship. Their review of the literature revealed three generic areas as most meaningful: premarital factors, social and economic factors, and interpersonal (dyadic) factors. Since marriages of participants in the study were of long duration, premarital factors could not be adequately assessed. Therefore, only the propositions regarding social and economic characteristics and interpersonal factors were utilized in this analysis. Figure 1 depicts the portion of the model relevant to this paper.

Insert Figure 1 here

Methodology

Subjects

Thirty-four professional dual career couples living in an industrial/university community in Tennessee were located by a modified network approach. The sample met the following criteria: (1) ever-married; (2) currently involved in full-time pursuit of professional careers; (3) having at least one child. Occupational areas for husbands included medicine, engineering, sales, managerial positions in the business world, psychotherapy, real estate, research, and planning, with the largest percentage either practicing law or teaching in a university setting. Career areas for wives included ownership of business firms, public relations, sales, research, planning, writing, real estate, and law, with the greatest percentage being nurses, teachers, and librarians. Age ranges were from mid-20's to mid-50's, with 59% of the sample being in their late thirties and early forties. Most of the couples had married in their early twenties, and the majority of marriages were of long duration (20% being married 6-10 years, 15% 11-15 years, 28% 16-20 years, 34% 21-25 years, and 3% 26-30 years). Although a few couples had as many as three, four, or five children, 29% had only one child and 53% had only two children. Age range of children was from one year to twenty-five years.

The sample was well educated, with the majority having

attained graduate degrees. All women had completed some college work, with 12% holding a bachelor's degree, 15% holding a bachelor's plus some graduate study, 26% holding a master's degree, and 26% holding a doctoral (Ph.D.,M.D., or LLB) degree. All men except one had attended college, with 12% holding a bachelor's degree, 3% holding a bachelor's plus some graduate study, 23% holding a master's degree, and 47% holding a doctoral degree. Thirty-two of the couples were Caucasian American, one couple was Black American, and one couple was Israeli American.

Instruments

The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) Inventory is an instrument which assesses five types relationship intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational. The instrument measures both the perceived level of intimacy and the expected or ideal level. Developed by Schaefer and Olson (1978) at the University of Minnesota, the PAIR has been rigorously validated by the authors. Each of the subscales positively correlates with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale with coefficients exceeding .30. The Moos Family Environment Scale was also used for comparative purposes; every PAIR subscale significantly correlated in the positive direction with the Moos' cohesion and expressiveness scales. Reliability testing consisted of a split-half method of analysis. All of the PAIR subscales have Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of at least .70.

The Career/Marital Stress of Women Inventory (CMSWI) was developed by Thomas and Shoun (1981) for assessing perceptions of both husband and wife regarding the developmental progress of the wife's career, with emphasis on stress factors, coping strategies, and spousal support. Response format is primarily structured, but several open-ended items are included. The final three questions are semi-projective in nature, asking respondents what advice they would give their daughters about career planning. The CMSWI was subjected to two types of field testing in order to establish content validity. No similar instrument exists, so a comparison or correlation could not be made. The instrument was carefully scrutinized by three university faculty members who conduct research on stress, women's issues, and family problems. Twenty graduate students in child and family studies made editorial suggestions for deletions, additions, and modifications of items. The CMSWI was then administered to ten couples who completed the survey under the conditions which were used in the study. Results were tallied and discussed with each of these couples, after which further revisions were made in the questionnaire. Alpha reliabilities of four subscales pertaining to work-related stressors and marital/family stressors ranged from .77 to .64. Cronbach's alpha for a fifth subscale (family crisis) was .35; internal consistency for this scale was lower since couples experiencing one type of crisis are not necessarily experiencing others.

Both the PAIR and the CMSWI were completed independently by spouses in their home and returned by mail to the researchers.

Analysis

The thirty-four couples were grouped on the basis of PAIR scores and CMSWI responses into two categories: high quality marriages (n=14) and low quality marriages (n=20). Assignment to groups was made primarily on the basis of PAIR scores, with scrutiny of CMSWI responses when necessary to confirm appropriateness of assignment. The absolute range of PAIR scores is 0-96, with the average perceived score in Schaefer and Olson's (1978) original sample falling between 42 and 58 for each scale with the exception of Social Intimacy ($\bar{x}$=61); the average expected (ideal) scores ranged from 80 to 86. There is no arbitrarily designated ideal amount of intimacy for couples. A couple may perceive themselves in the 50 range and expect their relationship to be in the 80's, while another couple may perceive themselves in the 40's but only expect that level. Therefore, in classifying the respondents, the amount of discrepancy between perceived and expected intimacy was scrutinized more carefully than the magnitude of the scores. A significant discrepancy was construed as 16 points or more between the current level of intimacy and the desired level.

High quality marriages were characterized by discrepant scores on fewer than three dimensions of intimacy. Low quality marriages had significant discrepancies on three or more dimensions, with 35% of the low quality couples having significant discrepancies on all PAIR subscales. PAIR discrepancy scores are presented in Table 1. Each discrepancy will be examined thoroughly in subsequent sections of the paper.

Insert Table 1 here

All ratings were performed independently, on a blind basis, by the authors and then comparisons were conducted. Inter-rater reliability exceeded .90 for all sorting and coding tasks of the study.

Results and Discussion

Themes and commonalities among couples emerged with remarkable consistency and were readily related to the various propositions of Lewis and Spanier's model. Characteristics of high and low quality marriages are presented in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 here

Our findings relevant to each aspect of the theoretical model will be summarized briefly; each section of the discussion begins with the appropriate Lewis and Spanier (1979) proposition.

I. Lifestyle Satisfaction Variables

A. The greater the socioeconomic adequacy of the family, the greater the marital quality.

It would be logical to conclude that dual career families have an advantage when this aspect of marital quality is considered. Family income exceeded $28,000 for over 3/4's of the participants in the study, and several couples mentioned benefits of their affluence (e.g., being able to dine out frequently and to hire domestic help). With the exception of a few couples in low quality marriages, financial conflict did not emerge as a significant problem for these respondents. The majority of husbands earned more money than their wives, which may partially explain this lack of conflict. Hardesty and Betz (1980) found that couples reported better marital adjustment when the greater amount of family income was contributed by the husband; marital adjustment decreased as the wife's income increased.

B. The more spouses' satisfaction with the wife's working, the more the marital quality.

Satisfaction of wives with their employment and the degree of husbands' approval of their employment will be considered separately.

Wives' Satisfaction with their Employment

Job satisfaction may contribute to overall self-worth and life satisfaction for wives, which may generalize to

greater marital quality. There is conflicting evidence in the literature regarding level of wives' career aspirations and commitment, however. Holahan and Gilbert (1979) found that women who are happiest in dual career marriages have only modest career ambitions. Women with high career aspirations have greater role conflict. Our own study corroborated this finding. The majority of the sample exemplified the "broken career lines" described by Poloma and Garland (1980), although their initial career commitment had been strong. All of the happily married women had displayed willingness to make major concessions concerning their careers because of family demands. Consequently, careers had taken a circuitous and erratic path.

The majority of women had initially selected traditional feminine occupations, with 65% entering teaching or human service areas. The role socialization of the sample during the 1950's had suggested few nontraditional alternatives. One woman in her early forties shared the following comments: "My parents valued achievement much more than most parents, but my ideas of careers were extremely limited. I saw few career women in my small hometown. My mother expressed frustration at not having pursued a career--she complained a lot--but she did nothing to help me see a wide range of choices or to analyze my talents and match them to occupations. She did not want me to go out of state to college, for example. My brother did discuss careers with me; he said I could go to medical school like him. I thought he was crazy."

The majority of the women either had not initiated their careers prior to marriage, or had been working for a very short time. Only 6% of the women had been involved in their careers as long as 4-6 years prior to marriage. Despite strong career commitment in the early years of marriage, many of the women (particularly the "accommodators" in high quality marriages) later dropped out of the work force during the childrearing years. For some, the length of career interruption was eight years or more. One woman expressed herself as follows: "To avoid some stress and guilt, I made the decision to stay home for a number of years. Although my career advancement may have suffered, I don't know that I would do things differently." Another woman postponed opening her own business until her children were teenagers. Some of the women continued to work during the childrearing years, but worked on a part-time basis or made adjustments in their schedules to meet family needs. Several women have worked continuously, but have been unable to complete graduate study.

A unique finding of this study, previously unreported in the literature, relates to major career shifts. Fifty-six percent of the women in this sample have either changed occupations (for example, from nursing to law) or changed to a very different type of work within an occupation (for example, from clinical nursing to teaching nursing courses in a university). When asked why they had changed occupations, the most frequently

cited reasons were insufficient satisfaction with the work, inadequate monetary compensation, and pregnancy/childrearing issues. Other reasons included lack of opportunity for advancement, insufficient challenge, opportunity for own business, and low recognition for achievement. Such career shifts were more prevalent in low quality marriages. These wives expressed regret due to their delay in finding gratifying work. When asked if they would have done anything differently, one woman (presently a lawyer) said, "I would have chosen a professional career right out of college, either medicine or law." Another said, "I would never have been either a nurse or a teacher."

Further analysis revealed that the career changes had often occurred after a considerable length of time had been invested in the first job; 12% had invested 6-10 years, and another 12% had invested 11-15 years. Since so many of the women have made a significant career shift or have returned to the work force after a career interruption, 47% of the sample have been involved in their present work situations for less than five years. Only 27% had been doing the same type of work for eleven years or more. In contrast, husbands were much more likely to have accumulated a significant number of years in the same position. Only 15% of husbands had been involved in their present jobs for as few as five years; 59% had been in their current work situations eleven years or more. Since longevity is a factor in determination of salary, benefits,

tenure, and other items, wives in this sample appear to be at a disadvantage compared to husbands.

Most wives are currently satisfied with their jobs, with the exception of about 1/4 of the wives in low quality marriages, showing that the career shifts were apparently beneficial psychologically. All wives in high quality marriages were satisfied with their current positions.

Another key finding related to perceptions of career pre-eminence. Couples in high quality marriages agree that the husband's career is pre-eminent, with 64% of wives putting their husband's career first. One such wife commented, "He makes more, is further along, better education." Unlike these couples, nearly half of couples in low quality marriages had incongruent perceptions of career importance. In some cases, the wife reported careers were of equal importance, while the husband deemed his career pre-eminent. In others, the wife viewed her husband's career as more important, but the husband claimed their careers were of equal importance.

Degree of Husband's Approval of Wife's Employment

Lewis and Spanier proposed that the higher the husband's approval of his wife's employment, the higher the marital quality; results of this study are confirmatory. The majority of husbands were initially very supportive of their wives' career goals. However, in many cases, level of spousal support had changed over the years. For wives in high quality marriages,

support had often increased, while decreased support or mixed support/sabotage were reported by wives in unhappy marriages.

Husbands of unhappy wives often made disparaging remarks about their wives' career efforts (e.g. "Her job is just a hobby to fill in idle time"), or gave nonverbal indications that they disapproved of career plans. An example of the latter was given by a wife who reported "desire to expand my role with travel/study etc. Husband seems to 'pout' but not express feelings."

Both PAIR and CMSWI data revealed additional communication problems between spouses which will be discussed in the section on spousal interaction variables of the model.

C. <u>The more the household composition is perceived as optimal, the higher the marital quality</u>.

Age of children emerged as one of the salient factors related to marital quality. Dual career couples in high quality marriages had older children (teenagers or young adults), while couples in low quality marriages had younger children. Wives in low quality marriages report much stress due to conflict with children's schedules and/or childcare arrangements.

Previous research has shown that wives retain the primary responsibility for childrearing in the dual career family (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1971; Holmstrom, 1972; Bryson, Bryson, & Johnson, 1978; Weingarten, 1978).

Staines, Pleck, Shephard, and O'Connor (1978) found that working had a negative effect on the marital adjustment of mothers with preschool children. Our study confirmed this result and additionally revealed some problems with older children, such as transporting them to athletic and social events or competing with teenagers for use of the car. One wife reported, "A few years ago most of my stress was related to what to do with young teens who were too old for sitters, day care, etc. Currently, much of my stress is related to trying to arrange for 15-year old daughter to continue her many summer activities." Another wife reported that even with sharing by husband and carpools with neighbors, "It takes constant work and daily scheduling, and will be ongoing until children get driver's licenses."

Husbands' assistance with childrearing was also a crucial factor. Joint sharing of responsibility for childcare was reported much more frequently in the high quality marriages, while the support provided by husbands in low quality dyads was rated by their wives as "low" or "moderate" in 65% of cases.

D. <u>The greater the couple's community embeddedness, the higher the marital quality</u>.

Previous research has suggested that dual career couples are particularly at risk when social involvement is assessed. Rapoport and Rapoport (1976), St. John-Parsons (1978), and Rice (1979) found a narrowed circle of friends, loosening of

kinship ties, and a marked lack of social activities in their studies. Dissatisfaction with social intimacy was evident in all low quality marriages in our sample, with the average discrepancy between perceived and expected scores for wives being 24.7 points and for husbands 16.7 points. Discrepancies between the current level and the desired level of social intimacy were much smaller in the high quality marriages; apparently, these couples were able to maintain an adequately satisfying social life despite the time constraints of their busy lifestyle.

II. Spousal Interaction Variables

A. The more positive the regard between the spouses, the greater the marital quality.

"Positive regard for spouse" includes perceived similarities, attractiveness to each other, consensus in values, and validation of self by other, according to Lewis and Spanier. Consensus in values is particularly significant for dual career couples, since they are involved in an innovative living pattern for which there is not yet universal societal support. Rice (1979) views an affirmation of the importance of career achievement for both partners as critical. This study reveals that couples in low quality marriages report discrepant perceptions on numerous critical issues. It was previously noted that career importance was perceived differently by many of these couples; perceptions of wife's level of stress and the amount of support by husband were also incongruent. In contrast, happy couples had similar

perceptions of career importance, wife's stress level, and amount of support by husband.

A considerable number of happy couples were involved in similar career pursuits (e.g., both researchers, both educators, both business executives), although usually not employed by the same firm or institution. The typical situation of such couples was that one partner would be teaching in a large university, while the other would be on the staff of a community college or in the K-12 school setting. Both, however, shared some of the same daily concerns and frustrations, and sometimes belonged to the same professional organizations. In couples with low quality marriages, only two dyads were in the same or similar professional fields.

B. The more the emotional gratification between the spouses, the more the marital quality.

This dimension of the model includes expression of affection, encouragement of personal growth, sexual satisfaction, and congruence between "ideal" spouse and actual. Dissatisfaction by wives with level of emotional intimacy was the most striking characteristic of those marriages classified as low quality. Eighty-nine percent of these wives had highly discrepant perceived and expected scores on the Emotional Intimacy subscale of the PAIR, with the magnitude of discrepancy averaging 43.8 points. Seventy-two percent of these wives agreed with item 25: "I feel neglected at times by my partner." Sixty-one percent disagreed with item 19: "My partner can really understand my hurts and joys."

Dissatisfaction by husbands with emotional intimacy was also noted in low quality marriages.

In comparison, spouses in high quality marriages were, for the most part, satisfied with the level of emotional gratification they were receiving.

Since the sexual dimension of marriage is closely related, it was not an unexpected finding that considerable sexual dissatisfaction was reported by respondents in low quality marriages (see Table 1 for mean discrepancy scores). High quality marriages were characterized by excellent sexual relationships, as evidenced by remarkably high perceived scores on the PAIR (mean for women 87.4, for men 85), and low discrepancy between perceived and expected level of sexual intimacy.

C. The more effective the communication between spouses, the more the marital quality.

Self-disclosure, empathy, and frequency of communication were included in this dimension of the model. Dual career couples here again seem to be at risk, for several reasons: (1) having communicated all day at work, they may arrive home suffering from "interpersonal overload"; (2) they tend to be highly verbal, but discuss issues on a cognitive, analytical level, with feelings given less legitimacy.

The Intellectual Intimacy subscale of the PAIR taps this aspect of the marriage, assessing the ease of sharing ideas, talking about daily events, job-related issues, and current affairs.

Dissatisfaction with intellectual intimacy was expressed by 89% of wives in low quality marriages, with the mean discrepancy between perceived and expected scores being 31.6 points. Husbands in these marriages expressed dissatisfaction also, but not to the same degree. Men and women in high quality marriages were more satisfied with their level of intellectual intimacy; the mean perceived level for wives was 77.4 and for husbands 73.7. Discrepancy scores were small for both spouses.

CMSWI data confirmed the PAIR results and disclosed a particularly salient area of dissatisfaction for wives. The majority of wives in low quality marriages had moderate or great difficulty discussing work-related activities with their spouses; no wives in dyads coded as high quality reported any difficulty talking about such matters. When discussions about work centered on the wife's successes in the professional arena, over half of the husbands in low quality marriages showed little receptivity to such discussions, while 71% of wives in high quality marriages perceived great receptivity from their husbands to accounts of work achievements. Further, when wives in low quality dyads tried to discuss work-related problems with their spouses, 30% showed little recptivity to such attempts and an additional 35% showed only moderate interest. In contrast, 71% of wives in high quality marriages perceived a great degree of receptivity from their husbands for sharing work-related problems. These couples often

employed creative strategies to make time for talks together. One couple "scheduled time each day for conversations"; another "set aside time weekly to be alone." A wife who is currently in a doctoral program reported that she and her husband share "glass of wine together at bedtime, coffee in bed in A.M., and he helps me research in library."

Dual career wives in this sample have thus identified an issue which previous research has not adequately addressed: the importance of husbands listening to work-related problems, activities, and achievements. Perhaps this is a far more critical issue than division of domestic tasks, which has been abundantly researched.

D. The greater the role-fit, the greater the marital quality.

Role-fit was defined as the absence of role conflict and included role complementarity and role sharing. Much attention has been given to these aspects of dual career marriage, with role overload being frequently cited as one of the most problematic areas (Renwick and Lawler, 1978; Staines et al.,1978; Hall and Hall, 1979; Rice, 1979; Skinner, 1980). This investigation showed that regardless of marital quality, role-fit/role sharing issues were indeed problematic. Discrepant perceptions regarding household role-sharing were noted in both types of marriages; husbands reported higher levels of assistance than wives reported for them. An example is illustrative: the husband, a sales

manager, reported that home management tasks were shared by him and the children, with a "positive outcome." His wife, a real estate broker, reported that she had "tried to convince spouse to help at home more. Outcome: negative." Another couple listed jobs and divided the work; the husband stated the strategy "seems to work", while his wife stated, "Outcome negative, husband did not follow through." This finding is consistent with Perrucci, Potter, and Rhoads (1978), who also found that husbands reported greater participation in household activities than wives reported for them.

The most acute imbalance occurred in the low quality marriages, however. The majority of these wives reported high levels of stress from role overload and home management tasks and only moderate or low levels of support from their husbands in these areas. Ten percent of husbands were viewed by their wives as completely unsupportive in the area of household management. Further, husbands in these dyads generally underestimated the magnitude of their wives' role overload and stress.

E. <u>The greater the interaction, the greater the marital quality</u>.

This final variable includes shared activities and companionship, which are assessed by the Recreational Intimacy subscale of the PAIR. Again, couples with high and low marital quality could be differentiated readily. Dissatisfaction for

husbands in low quality marriages was second only to their dissatisfaction with emotional intimacy (see Table 1 for mean discrepancy scores). Conflict regarding how to use leisure time also emerged on the CMSWI for those in low quality marriages. In contrast, spouses in high quality marriages reported greater recreational intimacy and less discrepancy between the current and desired level of interaction. This finding deserves further scrutiny, since previous research has not adequately examined the recreational aspect of the dual career marriage.

Conclusions

This paper has examined a number of determinants of marital quality and stability in dual career couples. Characteristics of high quality and low quality dual career marriages were clearly delineated. Couples in high quality marriages appear to have surmounted many of the difficulties inherent in this lifestyle, and report satisfaction with all aspects of relationship intimacy. These couples had congruent perceptions that the husband's career was pre-eminent, while the wife's career often had taken a circuitous and erratic course. Hubsands were supportive of their wives' careers, however, and willing to listen to accounts of their wives' work-related activities. Egalitarian role sharing was also more characteristic of high quality marriages. Children of these couples tended to be older (teenagers or young adults). Partners were frequently involved in similar career pursuits.

Couples in low quality marriges presented a much different picture. Dissatisfaction was evident in all areas of relationship intimacy, particularly emotional, and this dissatisfaction was most acute for wives. There was less agreement regarding whose career was pre-eminent, and less support by husbands for their wives' careers. Many of these wives had experienced difficulty finding gratifying work and had consequently made major career shifts during the marriage. Husbands in low quality marriages were less supportive with childrearing and household tasks and underestimated their wives' role overload and stress. Children of these couples tended to be younger, and there was considerable stress due to conflict with children's schedules and/or childcare arrangements. Only two of these couples were involved in similar professional pursuits.

This study has highlighted several phenomena which need further attention by researchers and family counselors. It appears that a crucial factor for marital quality is spousal consensus on the deeper philosophical/value issues (e.g. career pre-eminence) which underlie more overt conflicts regarding childcare or household management tasks. The process through which such consensus is successfully achieved by some couples might be illuminated by longitudinal investigation. Longitudinal studies could also assess changing levels of career involvement and relationship commitment, both of which fluctuate during marriage. Further consideration should be

given to the meshing of career cycles with the family life cycle and the reciprocal interaction of career and marital stressors.

Young men and women planning to combine marriage with professional careers obviously need better, more realistic preparation. Seminars for dual career couples might focus on enhancement of emotional intimacy, values clarification, transcendance of rigidly prescribed gender roles, methods of time management, and techniques of effective communication and negotiation.

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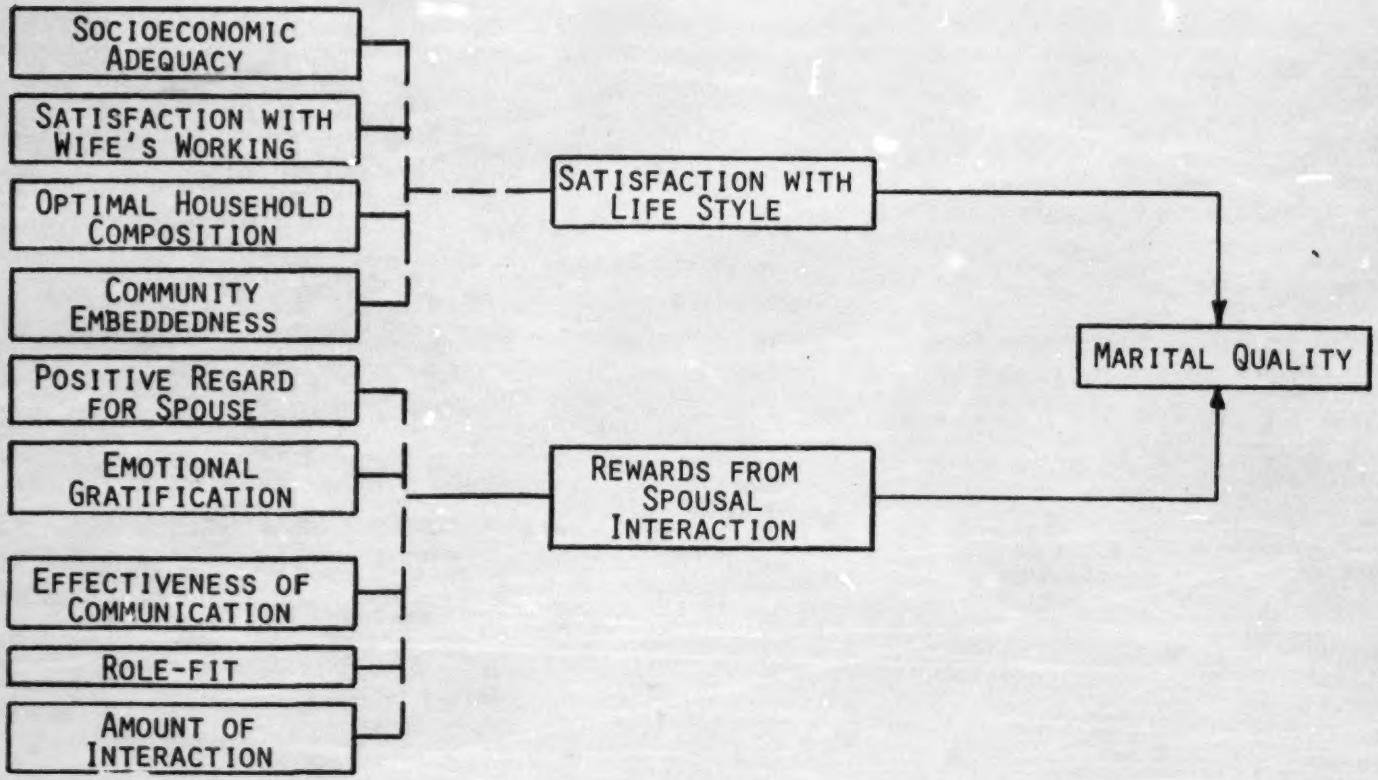
FIGURE 1

A THEORY OF MARITAL QUALTIY



NOTE: FROM "THEORIZING ABOUT THE QUALITY AND STABILITY OF MARRIAGE," BY ROBERT A. LEWIS AND GRAHAM B. SPANIER, IN W.R. BURR, R. HILL, F.I. NYE, & I.L. REISS (EDS.), CONTEMPORARY THEORIES ABOUT THE FAMILY: RESEARCH-BASED THEORIES. (VOL. 1). NEW YORK: THE FREE PRESS, 1979, P. 289. PERMISSION TO REPRINT REQUESTED.

Table 1

Mean PAIR Discrepancy Scores

Type of Intimacy		Low Quality Marriages	High Quality Marriages
Social	Wives	24.7	9.4
	Husbands	16.7	3.1
Emotional	Wives	43.8	11.0
	Husbands	22.2	13.0
Sexual	Wives	28.0	2.3
	Husbands	18.4	6.6
Intellectual	Wives	31.6	8.9
	Husbands	15.3	9.4
Recreational	Wives	31.5	11.4
	Husbands	20.7	5.0

Table 2

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH QUALITY MARRIAGES

WIVES

They report little or no difficulty discussing work-related activities, problems, and achievements with their husbands

They perceive husbands as supportive with childrearing and household tasks

They are satisfied with their work situations

HUSBANDS

Their support for wives' careers has increased since marriage

Their perceptions of wives' role overload and stress levels are similar to what wives report

MARITAL DYAD

They agree husband's career is pre-eminent

They are more likely to be involved in similar career pursuits (similar professions)

They have older children and more jointly share child care responsibilities

They are satisfied with levels of emotional, sexual, intellectual, recreational, and social intimacy within the relationship

CHARACTERISTICS OF LOW QUALITY MARRIAGES

WIVES

They report much difficulty discussing work-related activities, problems, and achievements with their husbands

They perceive husbands as less supportive with childrearing and household tasks

They are more likely to have made a career shift or change during marriage

They are acutely dissatisfied with the level of emotional intimacy in the relationship

HUSBANDS

Their support for wives' careers has decreased since marriage

Their perceptions of wives' role overload and stress levels are lower than wives report

MARITAL DYAD

There is less agreement regarding whose career is pre-eminent

They are less likely to be involved in similar career pursuits (similar professions)

They have younger children and report much stress due to conflict with children's schedules and/or child care arrangements

They are dissatisfied with levels of emotional, sexual, intellectual, recreational, and social intimacy within the relationship